DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 213 040 CS 206 758

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TITLE The Use of Poetry Therapy as a Projective Technique in Counseling and Psychotherapy.
PUB DATE Feb 82
NOTE 47p.; Paper presented at the Meeting of the California Personnel and Guidance Association (San Francisco, CA, February 12-15, 1982). For related document see ED 188 194.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bibliotherapy; *Catharsis; *Counseling Techniques; *Poetry; Psychological Needs; *Psychological Studies; Psychology; *Psychotherapy; *Writing (Composition)
IDENTIFIERS Freud (Sigmund); Jung (Carl G)

ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the research literature pertaining to the use of poetry writing in counseling and psychotherapy as a therapeutic intervention. The paper begins with the theoretical perspectives of poetry, then discusses S. Freud's and C. Jung's views of poetry from the psychological perspective. This is followed by a discussion of studies on poetry therapy as a branch of bibliotherapy and as a projective technique. The conscious and unconscious perceptions exposed through poetry writing are then reviewed, as well as research on poetry therapy's role as psychological or emotional catharsis. The paper next lists a series of word/poetic concepts for projective use, such as bird, wind, river, or desert. The appendix contains five subjects' rank ordering of these archetypical terms, and pieces of projective poetry using those images by each of the subjects. A list of useful psychological and literary terms concludes the paper. (HTH)

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The Use of Poetry Therapy as a Projective Technique in Counseling and Psychotherapy

A Paper Presented at the
1982 California Personnel and
Guidance Association

February 1982

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6545b/p1/SB:ra/jja (0302B/S82)

POETRY THERAPY AS A PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUE

This paper will review the literature pertaining to the use of poetry in Counseling and Psychotherapy as a therapeutic intervention. The major areas to be reviewed that are relevant to this paper are:

Theoretical Perspectives of Poetry Therapy
Freud's View of Poetry
Jung's View of Poetry
Poetry Therapy: A Branch of Bibliotherapy
Poetry Used as a Projection
Conscious and Unconscious Perception
Poetry Therapy and Catharsis
Use of Word Concept Deck for Projective Purposes
Selected Interviews
Useful Terms For Poetry Therapists

Although similar studies in psycholinguistics (Schloss, G., and Grundy, D., 1973; Blades, S., 1980) and in poetry therapy (Keesler, 1974; Ross, 1977) have been done, the presentation of specific internationally-important images as concepts, which normally occur in poetic language in the form of a projective and is a new and significant contribution to the field of counseling psychology.

Theoretical Perspectives of Poetry Therapy

The Apollonian influence, the connection between the god of healing and the god of poetry is making an ever-widening impact in the field of psychology as poetry therapy (Leedy, 1969, 1973, 1979). Historically, the Greeks recognized the underlying connection between the potency of poetry as a cathartic and healing agent for the ailing psyche and represented the knowledge in the mythical god, Apollo, the god of poetry and medicine. Therefore, it was not surprising to find that Aristotle, in his Poetics, considered the poet as equal to the physician with respect to the care and

attention of the psyche in distress. It is important here to emphasize the use of linguistic symbolization and metaphor as a therapeutic intervention. Shapiro (1978) states most poignantly that:

> A clinical therapist should realize that words carry psychological significance as well as an affective impact. If this were not so, we certainly could not influence others by our words -- either socially by verbal propaganda, or rhetoric, or in therapy -- and the psychological relevance of words and language would have to be considered zero. In fact, the very proposition that talking therapies work is dependent on some psychological mapping of linguistic variables which can account for the varied degree of impact that is recorded. Whether the impact is short or long-lived is irrelevant to this proposition. Again, the question is whether or not the variables we study linguistically are relevant for a better understanding of psychological organizations and can ultimately be applied in a practical manner by therapists (Shapiro, T., 1979, p. 26).

What Shapiro is saying is very clear. Principally, there is a missing link or a lack of interdisciplinary contact between linguists and psychotherapists. "Psychotherapy not only utilizes language and speech as a major mode of communication, but also depends on the interpretation of symbols -- an interpretation that has been enriched by linguistic developments over the past 20 years." (Shapiro, 1978)

Psychotherapy as we know it would not be possible were man not uniquely fitted to the emergent function of symbolizing in linguistic forms. When considering the study of linguistic forms, one recognizes the three elements of the communication system of language (Shapiro, 1979, p.5) in general and how these relate to psychotherapy before turning the focus of our attention to the specifics verbal concepts and their use in poetry therapy.

The three elements identified by Shapiro are semanticity, displacement, and productivity. Semanticity refers to the meaning function of language.

The displacement factor of linguistic forms concerns the "ability to represent an idea, or idea of a behavior, apart from the initial circumstance where it was first elicited (ibid., p. 8). For example, the use of verbal concepts considered as "archetypes" in linguistic form by literary and myth critics (Guerin, et al, 1966) involve the factor of displacement in that "our linguistic system permits representation of an idea or mental event in a sound trace in the vocal-auditory sphere and then in a picture or graphic representation as a row of alphabetic letters." (Shapiro, T., 1979, p. 8)

The third factor, productivity, involves the ability to put together the various linguistic forms into novel creative arrangements. This factor, combined with the first two factors, semanticity and displacement, are responsible and demonstrable in Progoff's (1975) therapeutic use of linguistic form in journal writing. With reference to poetry, "the lexical linguistic mode may be used to restore the originality of actions and imagery to the culturally desiccated or psychologically impoverished word by using language as a code to evoke a totality of experiencing and to turn the lexical token of an experience into its whole" (Stainbrook, E., 1978, p. 10).

In summary, the three aforementioned factors are significant for this study because the linguistic forms which contribute to the successful intervention and use of poetry in counseling and psychotherapy (Stainbrook, E., Henniger, O., Ansell, C., 1978) can be isolated to a single word such as a noun like tree, bird, ocean. These words can be displaced to represent graphically, in alphabetic letters, a mental event, which can be measured for meaning (semanticity) for a cross-cultural comparison by the semantic differential technique (Snider, J., and Osgood, C., 1969).

Freud's View of Poetry

> The poem and the unconscious share a major feature: both are represented in compressed form (Ansell, C., 1978, p. 13).

It was not until the discovery of the unconscious by Freud, that the Western World, especially in the field of medicine and psychoanalysis, began to re-establish the connecting link between poetry and the healing factor with respects to the unconscious (Freud, 1956). Emphasizing detachment, Freud said that "many emotions which are essentially painful may become a source of enjoyment to the spectator or hearers of a poet's work" (Freud, 1956, p. 124).

Freud felt that the poet stood out from the rest of humankind in that the poet, through the medium of language, was able to tap deeper truths within the unconscious.

> We laymen have always wondered greatly -- like the cardinal who put the question to Aristotle -- how that strange being, the poet, comes by his material. What makes him able to carry us with him in such a way as to arouse emotions in us of which we thought ourselves perhaps not even capable? (Freud, 1956, p. 122)

In other words, since the poet's medium of material for expression is language which is derived from the racial treasure-house of myths, legends, and fairytales (Freud, 1956), Freud, by crediting the discovery of the unconscious to poets, was able to link modern medical insight to the psychological intuitions of the past (Putzel, 1975).

> The genius of Freud consisted not in discovering what the poets have known and said for centuries. Freud himself acknowledged their priority (Hall, 1965, p. 81).

Freud believed that language has preserved the relationship between children's play and poetic creation and that "the true enjoyment of literature proceeds from the release of tensions in our minds" (Freud, 1956, p. 133).

He was particularly interested in unconscious reasons why patients distorted memorized poems by either altering particular words or deleting them completely (Freud, 1960).

> We are not usually surprised it is true, if a formula learned by heart, or a poem, can be reproduced only inaccurately sometime later, with alterations and ommissions (p. 16).

In sum, Freud planted the seed of awareness for the therapeutic use of poetry by recognizing its cathartic value for relieving repressed and tension-laden emotions and feelings. Poetry's projective quality, its use in determining the role the unconscious plays with respect to deletions, the forgetting of names and sets of words in memorized poems are also discoveries credited to Freud. (Freud, 1956, 1960).

Jung's View of Poetry

Jung extended the concepts postulated by Freud (1956) regarding the poetry and the unconscious by stating that the poet "speaks with a thousand tongues" because he has transcended the personal unconscious and is as a conduit for the collective unconscious of humanity (Jung, 1966).

> The impact of an archetype, whether it takes the form of immediate experience or is expressed through the spoken word, stirs us because it summons up a voice that is stronger than our own (p. 82).

Symbols, which compose the language of archetype are intuitive ideas that cannot be formulated in any other way.

> When Plato, for instance, puts the whole problem of the theory of knowledge in his parable of the cave, or Christ expresses the idea of the Kingdom of Heaven in parables, these are genuine and true symbols; that is, attempts to express something for which no verbal concept yet exists (p. 70).

In this sense, poetic language is important, according to Jung, in that certain poems stir within the reader's mind unconscious primordial or archetypal forces (Bodkin, 1978). The archetypes in the clothed form of creative and imaginative language "express something for which no verbal concept yet exists" seems to suggest that a system or language embodying the necessary verbal concepts could be developed to glimpse into the unconscious in order to better understand the role of primordial images in unconscious processes. Concerning such a language, Jung states:

> Only the beginnings of such a language exist, but once the necessary concepts are created they could give us an abstract, scientific understanding of the unconscious processes that lie at the roots of the primorial images (p. 81).

Because of Jung's contribution concerning his psychological theories and their relation to poetry as well as literature, one can appreciate the impact the application of his theories has had within literary circles with respect to myth criticism (Campbell, 1968; Guerin, Labor, Morgan, Willinsham, 1966). Jung (1933), feeling that the primordial experience is the source of the poet's creativeness, said that these archetypal images accept mythological imagery in order to manifest in linguistic form (Jung, 1966).

> I am assuming that the work of art we propose to analyse, as well as being symbolic, has its source not in the <u>personal unconscious of the poet</u>, but in a sphere of unconscious mythology whose images are the common heritage of mankind (p. 80).

Jung (1966) continues to amplify the importance of myth, when poetic language is regarded as a mirror-screen for projected inner life.

> They present a picture of psychic life in the average, divided up and projected into manifold figures of the mythological pantheon (p. 81).

Poetic language encased in mythical form would render expressive meaning for the reader which can elicit powerful responses therapeutically. Guerin, et al (1966), emphasized this point when commenting about a curious phenomenon in Campbell's (1959) work entitled The Masks of God: Primitive Mythology:

> Newly hatched chickens, bits of eggshells still clinging to their tails, will dart for cover when a hawk flies overhead; yet they remain unaffected by other birds. Furthermore, a wooden model of a hawk, drawn forward along a wire above their coop, will send them scurrying (if the model is pulled backward, however, there is no response). "Whence," Professor Campbell asks, "this abrupt seizure by an image to which there is no counterpart in the chicken's world? Living gulls and ducks, herons and pigeons, leave it cold; but the work of art strikes some very deep chord!" (p. 115)

But what does a myth critic do? And how might this information be useful for a therapist who uses poetry as a projective device? These questions are clarified as Guerin, et al (1966), continues:

> For it is the relationship of a literary art to "some very deep chord" in human nature that mythological criticism deals. The myth critic is concerned to seek out those mysterious artifacts built into literary "forms" which elicit, with almost uncanny force, dramatic universal reactions. He wishes to discover how it is that certain works of literature, usually those that have become, or promise to become, "classics", image a kind of reality to which readers give perennial response -- while other works, seemingly as well constructed, and even some forms of reality, leave us cold. Speaking figuratively, the myth critic studies in depth the "wooden hawks" of great literature; the so-called "archetypes" of "archetypal patterns" which the writer has drawn forward along the tensed structural words of his masterpiece and which vibrate in such a way that a sympathetic resonance is started deep within the reader (p. 116).

The connection between the healing profession of psychology and the mythopoeic dimension of literature is further amplified (Guerin, et al, 1966):

> An obviously close connection exists between mythological criticism and the psychological approach discussed in chapter 3: both are connected with the motives underlying human behavior. The difference between the two approaches are the degrees of affinities (p. 116).

Guerin clearly demonstrates that poetry therapy, a branch of literatherapy (Ross, 1977), when used as a projective technique, can be a very useful tool for the psychotherapist. The archetypal forces encased in the mythic imagery and linguistic form of poetry allow the therapist to use language itself as a mirror or projective screen of the client's inner world of reality. In other words, poetry makes the imaginative life of the inner world of the client communicable (Bodkin, 1978). Responses of the client to poetry, therefore, parallel closely the dynamic processes that occur in counseling and psychotherapy, particularly: identification, projection, catharsis, transference, insight, and growth (Hartman, 1951).

Poetry Therapy: A Branch of Bibliotherapy

Shrodes (1950) and Hartman (1951) were early pioneers with respect to the use of literature as a projective technique. Shrodes and Hartman agreed that "one of the advantages of a literary technique is the inclusion of all phases of psychotherapy within one technique. These three phases mentioned were diagnosis, prognosis, and the therapeutic gains. Another advantage emphasized was the economy of time. "This economy is attributed to the procuring of data for psychodiagnosis while at the same time the technique serves as a catharsis as well" (Hartman, 1951).

Since poetry therapy is another form of bibliotherapy (Barkley, 1972; Buck & Kramer, 1974; Harrower, 1969; Leedy, 1969; Silverman, 1977), the psychotherapeutic benefits, the economy of time, as well as catharsis, are just as evident and relevant as when using literature as a projective (Kobak, 1969).

Poetry Used as a Projective

Poetry is linguistic on several levels at once (Wheelwright, 1962).

> Poetic language generally, by reason of its openess, tends toward semantic plenitude rather than toward a cautious semantic economy. The power of speaking by indirection and by evoking larger, more universal meanings than the same utterance taken in its literal sense would warrant, is one species of semantic plenitude. But it may also be that the tenor of an image or of a surface statement is not single; the semantic arrow may point in more than one direction. When two such diversely intended meanings are sharply opposed, the result is paradox. But even when doubleness of meaning is not pushed to the point of contrariety it may often be the case that more than one meaning is suggested simultaneously by a certain word or phase or image. Or, more characteristically, there may be a group of verbal symbols, put together in a certain syntax and suggesting certain images, some more overtly than others, with the result that the interplay of meanings and half meanings is far more copious than any literal paraphrase could ever formulate (p. 57).

Therefore, when used as a projective technique, poetic language is used as a mirror to reflect the inner world reference structure of the client who is participating in the therapy session (Hall, 1965). Shadow play occurs, in that the images of experiences which make up the reference structure of the client's life are projected through his/her linguistic screen (Johnson, 1946; Sapir, 1949).

> One of the important applications of general semantics to personal casework lies in the relative continuous observation of unconscious projection, particularly in language behavior (p.402).

How this awareness is manifested is depends upon the scope and depth, richness or impoverishment of vocabulary the client has access to (Bandler & Grinder, 1975). Therefore, since very few persons have a knowledge of more than 10% of the vocabulary of their mother tongue (Ullman, 1962; Johnson, 1956), the client will often feel unable to discuss aspects of self with everyday social-cognitive language. As a result, he/she will use highly

expressive, affective language, which is rich with symbols and metaphor, because this is the language of feeling and has the degree of precision and scope needed for authentic selfdisclosure (Hayakawa, 1972; Kubler-Ross, 1978).

Ross (1977) has stated in her study of poetry therapy that:

> The members of poetry therapy groups in this study demonstrated a significantly greater degree of self-exploration than the members of the non-poetry groups, thereby lending support to the hypothesis that poetry facilitates self-exploration (p. 54).

Ross (1977) also found in her poetry therapy research that "there were significantly more communicative statements made in the poetry groups than in the groups that did not use poetry" (p.58).

Conscious and Unconscious Perception

Heninger (1978, p. 56) has used the symbolically rich communication imagery of poetic language in the therapy of his patients. Like Progoff (1975, p. 13) in his journal writing approach who attempts to assist the workshop participants to "position" and connect themselves to experience their "inner perspective of life," Heninger (1978) also tries to motivate the client to experience and integrate their inner and outer lives. He found that:

1. Poetry exposes unconscious forces to consciousness and organizes them into an understandable form. This is a therapeutic process. It makes arrangements out of derangements, harmony out of disharmony and order out of chaos.

2. Poetry provides a camouflage that allows the writer (and reader) to ventilate unacceptable, emotionally laden ideas and unconscious conflicts. It allows these ideas and conflicts to circumvent the usual repressive barriers and come to the surface. At the same time, it exposes them to the observing ego so they can be examined and organized.

3. There is clarity that comes from poetry. This clarity is akin to insight. With poetry, one can see more into oneself and become more intimately acquainted with one's own unconscious ideas and feelings. Poetry can provide a more honest way of looking at personal conflicts (p. 56).

When the language of poetry is used as a projective technique, one must consider the importance of conscious and unconscious perception regarding what the counselee perceives while reading selected poems (Lesser & Rapp, 1977; Morrison, 1978; Pietropinto, 1975). If poetry is used as a projective device, what role does the unconscious play in the projection? Lesser (1975), in his book Fiction and the Unconscious, said:

> While the nature of the conscious activity which occurs in reading fiction has not always been correctly understood, the very existence of unconscious, intuitive understanding is usually overlooked or alluded to cursorily. Nor is this surprising, though the part the unconscious plays is large and crucially important. Until a half-century ago the very word "understanding" was usually associated with conscious mental operations. The unconscious processes involved in response are, of course, not meant to come to our attention, and until recently no tools existed for exploring them. (p. 235)

The tool Lesser (1975) is referring to is the use of fictional literature as a projective, be it prose or poetry, to gain access to the out of awareness part of the person's inner life. Lesser continues by saying:

> So far as I know, for example, there is no exact parallel for the kind of division of labor by means of which fiction, or imaginative literature of any kind, is understood. A somewhat similar disassociation takes place when we sustain a desultory conversation while furtively daydreaming of something else. But while the conversation and the daydream typically have little in common, conscious and unconscious response to fiction feed upon the same stimulus and go forward in parallel tracks. Response to humor provides a close analogue, but the facade of a joke is very quickly pierced. In response to fiction, we fall into a kind of long-sustained trance, a semi-hypnotic state in which the conscious mind focuses upon the more manifest meaning of developments while the unconscious penetrates to implication upon implication to which the intellect chooses to be blind (p. 236).

Thus, with the use of imaginative literature as a projective, the reader not only reads the surface meaning which is conscious, but also perceives unconsciously the deeper meanings which are outside the awareness of the reader involved but still ever-present within his/her phenomenal field.

Poetry, like literature, when used as a projective device also stimulates the inner world of the reader at both the conscious and unconscious levels. A selected poem can be used by the therapist as a projective device for the reader (counselee) to discuss relationships with self and others. Bodkin (1978) brought this out in her research when she stated that:

> The powerful and continuing influence upon an individual's sensibility of the early relation to his parents is a factor we have found objectified again and again within poetic imagery (p. 329).

Leedy and Rapp (1973) have shown that poems from English and American literature were selected (in keeping with Leedy's theory of isoprinciple) to relieve insomnia, anxiety, and depression. Poetry was used both diagnostically and therapeutically to indicate suicidal tendencies or to diffuse and help resolve conflicts (Leedy & Rapp, 1973). Pietropinto (1975) used the projective aspect of poetry to elicit conscious and unconscious perceptions from his subjects.

Miller (1979) used the technique of poetry therapy with severely disturbed patients in group settings in order to enhance their ego functioning by helping them to identify with the artistic and creative aspects of their personalities. Thus, poetic language runs deep. It exerts a major influence on a person's unconscious. When used as a projective by the therapist, it becomes a mirror constructed of linguistic symbols which are powerful enough to stimulate conscious and unconscious perceptions from the client within a short period of therapeutic time.

Poetry Therapy and Catharsis

Since the individual is free to interact with the environment at all levels of living, he/she is free to invest energy in imaginary being which is linguistically encased just as easily as with concrete-sensory matter or people in the everyday world. Perceptually, what is perceived in his/her phenomenal field (Snygg & Combs, 1949) is reality for that person, regardless if it is subjective or objective in nature. This knowledge connects us to language since language is the major tool of the counselor or psychotherapist. We must not overlook the influence of linguistic symbols on human behavior since humans are unique in being a symbol-producing species. In other words, perception (due to linguistic symbols or, for example, language) exists on many levels (Hayakawa, 1972).

Imagery perceived, whether from real or imaginary sources such as fiction and poetry (Hayakawa, 1972), is stored in the brain and is said to become a part of the person's psychological field (Hartman, 1951). Therefore, certain types of poetry may be valuable for stimulating the release of emotional tension attached to inner imagery, by reflecting close enough, the client's inner psychological need (Leedy, 1969), thus allowing the client to symbolically relive portions of experiences, that closely parallel the emotional tenor of lived experiences which were traumatic or painful. Janov and Halden (1975) said:

> It is possible that information coming into the brain is stored holographically so that each scene and its feelings is represented in different areas all at the same time (p. 27).

Janov and Halden continue by saying it would take the entire brain with all its representations to make a complete picture conscious. Catharsis, then, can

occur as images and meanings (which form a gestalt) from the right hemisphere of the brain interact with linguistic form along with its phonetic and syntactic complexities (Zaidel, 1978). Both hemispheres of the brain become involved, which invites the client to gain a wider range of insight, awareness, and self-understanding. However, it is not important for the client to always understand consciously what was perceived unconsciously in order to benefit therapeutically (Haley, 1973; Lesser, 1975).

Blanton (1969), who used poetry for over 40 years as a therapeutic intervention for healing the emotionally distressed, discussed the cathartic value of poetry with respects to a woman suffering from emotional problems related to her disease.

> I remember seeing a woman who suffered from a progressive disease of the nervous system. She had been a very effective secretary, and she found a place where she could work a few hours a day. She had a collection of small cards which she could turn from one side to the other on a ring. Written on them were verses from the Bible and other poetry. She told me: "If I didn't have these passages to read each day, I don't think I could go on." She lives cheerfully and courageously.

There are several reasons why poetry, when used as a projective in therapy is useful as a tool for the therapeutic intervention of the emotionally distressed.

1. The reading of poetry involves the interaction of both directed and undirected thought (Vygotsky, 1962).
2. Through the presence of high concentrations of imagery, symbolism and metaphor, poetic language bypasses fixed rigid defenses, thus allowing the client to perceive meanings both consciously and unconsciously which aid in the healing process (Leedy & Rapp, 2973; Silverman, 1973).

3. The expressive types of meter (rhythm) in poetry can be selected to induce specific types of emotional reactions within the client (Hevner, 1937; Kreitler & Kreitler, 1972; Meerloo, 1969; Tedford, 1972).

4. The use of isoprinciple in poetry therapy (Leedy 1969) can be valuable with respects to catharsis. Leedy (1969) who coined this term with his pioneering work in poetry therapy states:

> The isoprinciple, effective in music therapy, has proved important in the choice of poems for use in poetry therapy. Just as music that has the same feeling as the mood or mental tempo of the patient has been proven to be a valuable tool, poems that are close in feeling to the mood of the patient have been found helpful. Depressed patients, for example, are helped by poems sad and gloomy in tone yet having lines and stanzas that reflect hope and optimism, especially toward their conclusion. By reading, studying, memorizing, reciting or creating this kind of poem, depressed patients come to feel that they are not alone in their depressions, that others are also depressed, that others have been depressed and recovered from their depressions, and that no disgrace attaches to victims of extreme alterations of mood. For them, crying precipitated by a poem is often therapeutically helpful; the poem becomes symbolically an understanding, someone with whom they can share their despair (p. 67).

Word Concept Deck: Psycholinguistic Use of Archetype as Word/Poetic Concepts for Projective Use

The following are examples of archetypes and their symbolic meanings in which they tend to be universally associated in the Jungian archetypal and the mythological approaches to literary criticism. These were presented as word-concepts individually on 3x5 cards for rank order arrangement. Since the understanding of the symbolic language of poetry involves myth motifs and images called "archetypes" (Wheelwright, 1962), their psychological

significance in the projective use of poetry is very valuable for the counselor or psychotherapist. The following are some examples of poetic images or archtypes used as projectives. The subjects' responses to these images are available in the appendix.

Images

1. Bird
   Transcendence; the soul; a spirit; ability to enter into a higher state of consciousness; thought; imagination (Cooper, C., 1978, p.22).

2. Tree
   Dynamic life as opposed to the static life of the stone: signifies regeneration; the return to the primordial state of perfection. The beginning and end of a cycle (Cooper, C. 1978, p. 176).

3. Ship
   Microcosm; mankind's voyage through space and time (Guerin, W., Labor, E., Morgan, L., and Willingham, J., 1966, p. 21).

4. River
   Transitional phases of the life cycle; the flowing of time into eternity (Guerin, W., Labor, E., Morgan, L., and Willingham, J., 1966, p. 119). The flux of the world in manifestation. The passage of life (Cooper, C., 1978, p. 139).

5. Moon
   Feminine power; the Mother Goddess; inner knowledge; the spiritual aspect of light in darkness; irrational, intuitional and subjective (Cooper, C., 1978, p. 107).

6. Ocean
   Primordial waters; chaos; formlessness, endless motion; material existence; sea of life which has to be crossed (Cooper, C., 1978, p. 121). Spiritual mystery and infinity; timelessness and eternity; the unconscious (Guerin, W., Labor, E., Morgan, L., and Wellingham, J., 1966, 119).

7. Desert
   Spiritual aridity; death; nihilism or hopelessness (Guerin, W., Labor, E., Morgan, L., Willingham, J., 1966, p. 120).

8. Wind
   The intangible; transient, insubstantial; elusive. The spirit, the vital breath of the universe; the power of the spirit in sustaining life and holding it together; hence, the symbolic association of wind with cords, ropes, threads, etc. "The rope of the wind... The thread is the same as the wind" (Upanishads)(Cooper, C. 1978, p. 192).

9. Sun
Creative energy; consciousness (thinking, enlightenment, wisdom, spiritual vision); father principle (Guerin, W., Labor, E., Morgan, L., Willingham, J., 1966, p. 119).

10. Serpent
A highly complex and universal symbol. The serpent and dragon are often interchangeable and in the Far East no distinction is made between them. The symbolism of the serpent is polyvalent; it can be male, female, or self-created. As a killer, it is death and destruction; as renewing its skin periodically, it is life and resurrection; as called, it is equated with cycles of manifestation. It is solar and lunar, life and death, light and darkness, good and evil, wisdom and blind passion, healing and poison, preserver and destroyer and both spiritual and physical rebirth. It also signifies primordial instinctual nature, the upsurging life force; uncontrollable and undifferentiated (Cooper, C., 1978, p. 146).

APPENDIX

Appendix includes:

1. Selected interviews of subjects who volunteered for this research project. All subjects signed a consent form to be interviewed and were told that they could stop at any time.

2. Useful terms for a poetry therapist.

RANK ORDER OF ARCHETYPES

According to the
Preference of the Subject

Sun

Ocean

Tree

Bird

Ship

Moon

River

Desert

Road

House

Wind

Serpent

Subject 1
Woman
Age 38

Ship

sailboat - with many red sails

not too big/not too small

in ocean going to an island

don't have a real light schedule

---

birds will help guide ship if ship gets lost

This woman of 38 imagined herself as a sailboat (needing the assistance of the wind) with red sails. The red sails are symbolic of physical energy. While the birds represent the guidance of her higher self which guides the ship (physical being) through space and time.

Wind

very powerful

can change a lot of different things

(potential for danger)

spreading pollen

not a absolute thing you can count on

powerful

strong

unpredictable

deadly

peaceful

Note on the previous page the ship was dependent on the wind as it was a ship with sails. Here, the subject refers to the wind as unpredictable.

Road

in woods

lead from one room schoolhouse

to house

not a freeway

no cars can travel on it

however horses can

I'm long with fences along the side

don't have/see definite ending

In this example, subject 1 speaks metaphorically, suggesting a nostalgia for an earlier time period when one room schoolhouses were more plentiful and people rode by horse.

RANK ORDER OF ARCHETYPES

According to the
Preference of the Subject

Sun

Ocean

River

Tree

House

Moon

Bird

Ship

Road

Desert

Wind

Serpent

Subject 2
Woman
Age 40

Ship

I take people on nice cruises

I'm large

Sometimes I crash against rocks

Out in the middle

of ocean -- alone

I am on my way to fight a battle

This woman of 40 imagined herself crashing against rocks (obstacles in life). Her last statement about her going to fight a battle suggests conflict with self or significant others.

House

I am security
for the family that lives there
It costs a lot of money
to keep me
Security
I like the kitchen
because it is the most comfortable

The theme of security and protection are emphasized in this image and in the following "Tree" image.

Tree

I'm in a forest
I'm a Redwood tree
I protect the land
from erosion
I'm unique

ORDER OF ARCHETYPES
According to the
Preference of the Subject

Sun

Moon

Ocean

River

Wind

Tree

Bird

House

Desert

Road

Ship

Serpent

Subject 3
Male
Age 22

Sun

I feel a lot of energy
Spirits of energy
Radiating a lot of heat
  and energy
Lot of darkness
Alone
  nothing around

Subject 3, a male of 22, suggests much energy, but no mention of light. He does mention, however, that he is alone and there is a lot of darkness.

Serpent

Water serpent
Half submerged
  and half above water
My surroundings
  like a lake
Underneath
  there are passages
Dark brown

The water symbolism appears when Subject 3 imagines he is a serpent which is "half submerged" and "half above" water. The reference to passages underneath indicate an interest in exploring the many ways of the unconscious.

ORDER OF ARCHETYPES
According to the
Preference of the Subject

Sun

Moon

Ocean

Wind

Bird

River

Road

Tree

Desert

Ship

House

Serpent

Subject 4
Woman
Age 51

Ocean

I can go anyplace
as the ocean.
I am ocean at the Carribean
Because clean and warm
and beautiful.
I can carry people around.
Some people may dump garbage
in me --
They do it anyway --
but I don't like it though.

When Subject 4, age 51, imagined she was the ocean, she became aware that some people were dumping garbage in her. Metaphorically, she seems to be saying that she feels that other people tend to dump their problems on her shoulders and she doesn't like it.

Sun

I'm important.

Warm

Hot

Shining

Overshadowed with clouds

sometimes. . .

Some days I won't be around

Because overshadowed by clouds.

Situational difficulty is symbolically described by the reference of the clouds overshadowing the sun.

Moon

Too cold --

Don't want to be the moon.

The moon, symbolic of the feminine, is referred to as being "too cold."

House

House can't talk.

Warm

I can't say that

because I'm the house.

Security

Shelter

I meet friends there.

I make everybody welcome.

Track house

like barn.

Shouldn't have said that.

Don't like the kitchen.

Like family room

in front of fireplace.

Here, Subject 4 has restricted herself as to what she can say and cannot say. This reflects her reference structure. Since she is the one who created her house, only she can change the rules.

Tree

I am standing there
with my roots in the earth.
Nobody can do anything to me
because I'm strong.
I would bare fruit
Oranges, I think.
I won't loose my leaves
- green all year around -
means I'm not going to die.

Oranges suggest the energy of life. Not loosing her leaves represent fertility, growth, and hope as she get closer to the end of her life.

RANK ORDER OF ARCHETYPES

According to the
Preference of the Subject

Wind

Road

Ocean

House

River

Moon

Ship

Sun

Bird

Tree

Serpent

Desert

Subject 5
Male
Age 26

Ship

USS Constitution
There's a harbor
and it's firing its guns.
Smoke all around---
battle flags
victory
Ship is all clear
People on the pier

Subject 5 is a male of 26. He describes himself as a ship firing its guns.

Ocean

I am the breath of the earth.
I am the life of the earth.
I am a raging storm
  and again calm and tranquil
Calm on surface
  raging underneath
In U.S.
  raging on surface
    and calm underneath
Lots of activity

The conscious and unconscious life of Subject 5 are referred to as the ocean expressing two levels, the the "surface" and "underneath."

Bird

I'm a sparrow
I'm in somebody's backyard.
Lady talking --
  she wants me to get closer.
I keep coming day
  after day
Something interrupts
  and I fly away.

The subject symbolically discusses his attempts to "get closer" and know himself better.

Useful Terms

1. Associative Field in this study will be defined as the network of associations surrounding a particular word which connects it with other terms (Ullman, 1962).

2. Archetype: The myth-forming structural elements or seed potentials which are ever present in the unconscious psyche and manifest as "motifs or primordial images" (Guerin, Lakor, Morgan, Willingham, 1966).

3. Culture-Specific: The aspects of culture which are unique and individual and not universal.

4. Conceptual Sphere: The field theory of linguistics. Each separate language should be viewed as an organic gestalt which is individual and unique from all other languages. It is the expression and characterization of one nation's psyche (Basilius, 1952, Ullman 1962).

5. Deep Structure: The full linguistic representation from which the surface structure of the language is derived (Bandler and Grindler, 1975).

6. Directed Thought: Thought which is social and develops and is influenced by life experiences and logic proper (Vygotsky, 1962).

7. Deletion: A process by which selected portions of the world perceived are excluded by the speaker from the deep structure of the language and, as a result, do not appear in the Surface Structure manifestations of the speaker's language (Bandler & Grinder, 1975).

8. Impoverishment: In the purpose of this study, impoverishment may be defined as a restricted vocabulary which allows the person to perceive few or no choice-options at all with regards to individual behavior (Bandler & Grinder, 1975).

9. Isoprinciple: The reading of poetry written by others which is close in feeling and mood to the inner psychological state of the person concerned. "A poem has been described as the shortest emotional distance between two points" (Leedy, 1969). A depressed person reading gloomy and sad poetry which also reflects light, hope, and optimism can learn that others have been through this "emotional road of trials" and survived. This can be very powerful in that the person concerned is invited into mobilizing his/her inner resources for psychological strength and determination as aids while riding out the problem (Putzel, 1975).

10. Image: The most fleeting product of consciousness which comes before thought and is a microcosm of the psyche.

11. Language: For this system, language may be defined as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols (Gaeng, 1971).

12. Language Matrix: For the purposes of this study, language matrix can be defined as the conceptual and grammatical form into which thoughts are crystalized (Sapir, 1949).

13. Lexicon: In this study, lexicon is defined as the total vocabulary of a language (Wardhaugh, 1972).

14. Meaning: A point in space which is determined by direction and distance, quality and intensity (Osgood, Suci, Tannenbaum, 1969, p. 56).

15. Metaphor: Metaphor as referred to in this study will be defined as an implied analogy which imaginatively identifies one object with another (Holman, 1972), or the direct expression of evaluation which occurs when a person has strong feelings to express (Hayakawa, 1972).

16. Myth: In its relationship to literature and poetry therapy, myth will be defined as the unique embodiment of the cosmic view of a person or people (Holman, 1972).

18. Poetry: The term "poetry" in this study will be defined as the language and expression of the inner self manifested outwardly.

19. Poetry Therapy: The phrase "poetry therapy" in this study will be used to describe the use of poetry in therapy to give shape and expression to the inner world of the person in the language of symbol and metaphor.

20. Reference Structure: In this study, reference structure will be defined as the sum total of experiences in a person's life history (Bandler & Grinder, 1975).

17. Orthogonal dimension: Pertains to angles or perpendicular lines (Eucledian) which exhaust the dimensionality of space. The three independent dimensions of semantic space are: evaluation, potency, and oriented activity (Osgood, Suci, Tannenbaum, 1969, p. 56).

21. Semantic Differential: A particular kind of measurement operation. The semantic differential relates to the functioning of representational processes in language behavior and hence may serve as an index to these processes (Osgood; Suci; Tannenbaum; 1978, p. 9).

22. Semantic Differentiation: The successive allocation of a concept to a point in the multidimensional semantic space by selection from a set of given scaled semantic alternatives (Osgood, Suci, Tannenbaum, 1969, p. 64).

23. Semantic Space: A region of unknown dimensionality. Using the semantic differential, the meaning of a particular concept to a particular individual can be specified quantitatively as a particular point in multidimensional space defined by the instrument (Osgood, 1969, p. 36).

Semantic space is a multidimensional space. "In every analysis more than three factors have to be contributing to the meaningful judgements by subjects. It is also clear that these N factors or dimensions are not equally important in mediating judgements, or perhaps better, are not equally used by subjects in differentiating among the things judged. Three factors appear to be dominant, appearing in most of the analyses made and in roughly the same orders of magnitude -- evaluation, potency, and activity" (Osgood, Suci; Tannenbaum, 1978, pp. 71-72).

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